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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3950th meeting of the Security Council, held on 30 November 1998 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls the report of the Secretary-General of 13 April 1998 on 'The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa' (S/1998/318). While reaffirming its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, it underlines the increasingly important role of regional arrangements and agencies, and of coalitions of Member States in the conduct of activity in this field. The Council reaffirms that all such activity taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies, including enforcement action, shall be carried out in accordance with Articles 52, 53 and 54 of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. It also underlines the importance of all such activity being guided by the principles of sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of all States, and by the operational principles for United Nations peacekeeping operations set out in the statement of its President of 28 May 1993 (S/25859).

The Security Council welcomes the views expressed by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 42 to 44 of his report, in particular as they relate to Africa. It recognizes that the authorization by the Council of action by regional or subregional organizations, or by Member States or coalitions of States, can be one type of effective response to conflict situations, and commends Member States and regional and subregional organizations which have undertaken efforts and initiatives towards the maintenance of peace and security. In order to enhance its ability to monitor any activities that it has authorized, the Council expresses its readiness to examine appropriate measures whenever such an authorization is being considered.

In this regard, the Security Council notes that there is a wide variety of arrangements and relationships which have developed in different instances of cooperation between the United Nations, Member States and regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security, and that monitoring requirements will vary and should be tailored

according to the specifics of the operations in question, including in relation to ongoing peace efforts. But in general operations should have a clear mandate, including a statement of objectives, rules of engagement, a well-developed plan of action, a time-frame for disengagement, and arrangements for regular reporting to the Council. The Council affirms that a high standard of conduct is essential for successful operations, and recalls the role of the United Nations in setting general standards of peacekeeping. The Council stresses that missions and operations must ensure that their personnel respect and observe international law, including humanitarian, human rights and refugee law.

The Security Council is also of the view that, where necessary or desirable, monitoring of such activities could also be enhanced by the inclusion of certain civilian elements, for instance dealing with political and human rights issues, within missions and operations. In this context, the Security Council also recognizes that the attachment of a United Nations liaison officer or team could improve the flow of information between the Council and those engaged in the conduct of an operation authorized by it but carried out by a coalition of Member States or regional or subregional organization. It expresses its readiness to consider, in consultation with the Member States and regional or subregional organization concerned, the deployment of liaison officers to such operations, on the basis of recommendations by the Secretary-General and as proposed in paragraph 8 of its resolution 1197 (1998) of 18 September 1998. In the case of operations conducted by regional or subregional organizations, the Council also expresses its readiness to consider, in consultation with the regional or subregional organization concerned, whether the deployment of liaison officers at the headquarters of the organization would be valuable.

The Security Council also underlines that the monitoring of such operations could be enhanced by the improved flow and exchange of information, inter alia, through regular submission of reports, as in the case of the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements in the Central African Republic, and through the holding of regular briefing meetings between its Members and regional and subregional organizations and Member States conducting such operations, and troop contributors and other participating Member States.

The Security Council shares the view of the Secretary-General that one possible means of monitoring activities of forces authorized by it, while also contributing to the broader aspects of a peace process, is through co-deployment of United Nations observers and other personnel together with an operation carried out by regional or subregional organization or by a coalition of Member States. The Council agrees with the Secretary-General that, while such collaboration is not applicable in all cases, co-deployment can make an important contribution to peacekeeping efforts, as in the cases of Liberia and Sierra Leone where United Nations observer missions have been deployed alongside the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States.

The Security Council underlines the importance, whenever the United Nations deploys forces alongside forces of regional or subregional organizations or Member States, of establishing a clear framework for cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the regional or subregional organization or coalition of Member States concerned. Such a framework should include specifying objectives, the careful delineation of the respective roles and responsibilities of the United Nations and the regional or subregional organization or coalition concerned and of the areas of interaction of forces, and clear provisions regarding the safety and security of personnel. The Council also stresses the importance of ensuring that United Nations missions maintain their identity and autonomy with regard to operational command and control and logistics.

The Security Council urges Member States and regional and subregional organizations to ensure the Council is kept fully informed of their activities for the maintenance of peace and security. The Council undertakes to consult regularly with Member States and regional and subregional organizations involved in such activities to facilitate this."

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